Grand Jury to Question Peoples Temple Members

From News Services

A federal grand jury in San Francisco is scheduled to begin questioning Peoples Temple members today in an effort to determine if there was a conspiracy to murder Rep. Leo J. Ryan (D-Calif.).

Among those subpoenaed to testify are 17 Temple members who recently returned from Guyana, where the Ryan ambush and cult mass suicides occurred on Nov. 18.

The FBI has already interviewed hundreds of Temple members and associates concerning the Ryan murder, and the Justice Department is conducting a parallel investigation into the financial affairs of the organization.

There were reports that lawyers Charles Garry and Mark Lane, who were in Jonestown at the time, might be among those to be questioned, but Lane said last night in a telephone interview that he had neither been subpoenaed nor asked to testify.

Lane met with federal authorities in the San Francisco area Wednesday and discussed "the question of immunity . . . for my client," Terry Buford, who had been one of the Temple's key operatives. He said U.S. Attorney William Hunter told him at the end of the meeting that he saw no need for it.

Waxing indignant, Lane also hotly denied broaching the subject of immunity for himself, as had been reported in the Los Angeles Times.

The Guyanese government has filed murder charges against one Temple member, Larry Layton. The U.S. government is basing its investigation on a statute making it a federal crime to conspire to kill a member of Congress.

Police Say $1 Million Found Around Jonestown Cult Camp

GEORGETOWN, Guyana, Dec. 7 (AP)—A police official here said today that about $1 million has been found in and near the Peoples Temple settlement of Jonestown, and he predicted still more will be found.

Unconfirmed reports from survivors of the settlement and lawyers for the group said up to $3 million might have been at the colony, where more than 900 American cult members died in a mass suicide-murder Nov. 18.

Cecil A. Roberts, assistant commissioner for crime of the Guyana National Police Force, said he had no indication that much money could be in Jonestown. He confirmed earlier reports that about $500,000 was found hidden in various places at the settlement shortly after the deaths, some of it buried. The rest, he said, was found near the settlement.

Roberts said he had no immediate plans to bring further charges against the 36 of the 80 Peoples Temple survivors still in Guyana. Two have been charged with murder, one in the shooting deaths of Rep. Leo Ryan (D-Calif.) and four of his party at an airstrip near Jonestown, and the other in the throat-slashings of a cult official and her three children at Temple headquarters in Georgetown.

The other 34 are held as potential material witnesses.

Testimony continued today in a preliminary hearing for Charles E. Beickman, 42, of Indianapolis, who is charged in the throat slashings. The hearing, to determine if there is enough evidence for a trial, is expected to continue at least into next week.

A preliminary hearing is scheduled Jan. 15 for Larry Layton, 32, of San Francisco, charged in the airstrip killings.

Associated Press

Laura Johnston, a Peoples Temple member, arrives from Guyana at New York hotel.